

## U. S. DUCHESS TAKES CHARGE OF BIG ESTATE

Former Gladys Deacon, of Boston, Who Recently Wed the Divorced Duke of Marlborough, Works in Fields With Tenants and Manages Stock Farm, Presiding at All Sales of Horses—Lady Torpichen, Long Island Beauty, Opens Town House in London—Two Daughters of Countess of Essex Take Up "Bachelor Quarters" in Belgravia.

By GERTRUDE LADY DECIES.

Special to Universal Service.

LONDON, Nov. 5.

A MINATURE Ziegfeld Follies made its appearance in London West End this week with the patronage of the most prominent society people, when the "midnight follies" produced in the magnificent ballroom of the new Metropole Hotel leaped into immediate favor. Now the rendezvous of the smartest sets of Mayfair, directed by Jack Haskett, formerly associated with Ziegfeld, bears the earmarks of the New York roof's numbers and ensembles, but all is new. Thursday night scores of Mayfair leaders wildly applauded the production, which opens at 10 and closes at 12:30, with all the liquor that can be consumed. The cost is \$5 for entrance, with food and wine extra, but it is sold out for weeks.

THE Duchess of Marlborough, formerly Gladys Deacon, of Boston, has gone back to the land with a vengeance. Not content with taking charge of her husband's stock farm at Blenheim, presiding at all the sales, and taking her own motion pictures of the estate, she is now actively engaged as a laborer on her own farms. The other day she donned overalls and a straw hat and joined the potato diggers and worked the whole morning uprooting spuds, in order to determine exactly the working conditions of her tenants with a view to deciding what they would be paid. At the same time she finds time to attend the smartest functions in London and numerous house parties in the countryside.

SPEAKING of the Marlboroughs, I hear that Madam Consuelo Balsan, who recently divorced the duke, is going to sell her million-dollar London mansion, Sunderland House, which was built for her by her father, W. K. Vanderbilt, on the occasion of her first marriage. She has not lived there for the last six years, the house being used by the government for war purposes. It is understood she has given up England as a permanent residence, preferring Paris and the continent.

## LADY RIBBLESDALE CREATING BIG STIR BY ADVANCEMENT IN LONDON SOCIETY

Cholly Knickerbocker.

Registered, U. S. Patent Office.

NEW YORK, Nov. 5.

THE New York smart set is always deeply interested in the latest gossip about the ever-increasing American colony in London, and the other day when I happened to dine with a well-known matron who has just returned from an extended stay in the British metropolis my hostess imparted a bit of news which I am certain will come as a distinct surprise to the New York-Newport colony.

Those with long memories—and there are certain people who never, care to forget anything—will remember that Lady Ribblesdale in the days when she was Mrs. John Jacob Astor, had anything but a pleasant career in metropolitan society. Not that the one time Ava Willing was not a great favorite with the "powers that be"—goodness, no; her beauty and wit made her extremely popular with the "elegantes."

Domestic troubles, however, made the former Mrs. Astor's life here in New York nothing short of miserable, and some years ago, when she divorced the late Mr. Astor and went to London to live, her numerous friends hoped her troubles were over.

Lady Ribblesdale and her late mother-in-law, the very imperious Mrs. William Astor, were always at loggerheads. Having been born to great prestige as a member of the Schermerhorn family, Mrs. Astor was of the opinion every one should bow to her wishes and obey her commands. Lady Ribblesdale was also a member of an old and prominent family, and so great was the social prestige of the Willings during the early colonial days that Mrs. John

Jacob Astor looked upon her autocratic mother-in-law as something of a "newcomer" compared with the Willings.

There was never any love lost between the two Mrs. Astors, and the junior Mrs. Astor refused to play second fiddle to the matron who ruled No. 840 Fifth Avenue in such a royal manner.

However, to proceed. Lady Ribblesdale's friends were doomed to disappointment. Her advent in London society did not create even a ripple of excitement. Certain influential London hostesses invited Mrs. Astor to their parties, and her great beauty in a way created much talk. At that time Consuelo, the former Duchess of Marlborough, who recently became the bride of Jacques Balsan, was the undisputed leader of the American colony in London. Mrs. John Mackay, Clarence Mackay's mother, was dividing her time between the British metropolis and the French capital, but she shared honors with the duchess.

The beautiful Mrs. Astor was deeply grieved over the cool reception she received in London, and to this day a number of wisecracks insist that the late Baron Astor, of Hever Castle, was responsible for the somewhat difficult time Mrs. John Jacob Astor had during her first years in the London smart set. The late lord of Hever Castle was never popular in England, despite the fact that he gave huge sums of money—derived from his vast holdings here in New York—to English charities. The feeling against the expatriated millionaire extended to Mrs. John Jacob Astor.

The latter, however, is blessed with no end of grit and determination, and she soon laid plans for a long battle. At the beginning of the

PRINCESS CANTACUZENE, who spent much of her girlhood in Washington, is passing this winter here with her mother, Mrs. Frederick Dent Grant, and her daughter, Princess Bertha, will have her first taste of society in the Capital. Miss Eleanor Hill, the daughter of Mrs. Richard S. Hill, and Miss Nancy Hoyt, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry M. Hoyt are two of the season's prettiest buds. Miss Dorothy Gowen is the daughter of Col. and Mrs. James B. Gowen, now stationed at Washington Barracks, and was presented to society last winter. Miss Elaine English is a charming Philadelphia girl, who is a frequent visitor to Washington.



Miss ELEANOR HILL

PHOTO. © BY HARRIS & EMMING

world war a great intimacy sprang up between the Duchess of Marlborough and Mrs. Astor. The former included the latter in all her important charities, and in a short time Mrs. Astor became the second lady of the American colony. Shortly afterward it was noticed that Lord Ribblesdale, who has so frequently been referred to as "Great Britain's most picturesque peer," began paying marked attention to the beautiful American woman, and no one was surprised when they were married.

Lord Ribblesdale possesses one of the mightiest social positions in all England. He is a great favorite at court, and has held many high government positions.

His wife soon became a prominent figure in the very set that had looked askance at her when she first attempted London society. Some months afterward the news that the Duchess of Marlborough would enter suit for divorce from her dual spouse was given out to the world. No one was surprised, inasmuch as the duke and the former Consuelo Vanderbilt had many years before "agreed to disagree."

Again fate played in the former Mrs. Astor's hand. From being the first lady of the American colony, Lady Ribblesdale stepped into the place vacated by the former Duchess of Marlborough, and my dinner hostess was bubbling over with enthusiasm about Lady Ribblesdale's activities.

She tells me the former Miss Willing is the most talked-of woman in London, her frocks, her hair, even her complexion being written in the smart magazines. She is giving a series of regal dinner parties during the season and only the super-exclusive are bidden to the feasts.

Little did we think in the old days, when Ava Willing was one of the blushing Philadelphia debutantes, that the day would arrive when she would be the most-talked-of woman in English society. Her mother, the late Mrs. Edward Willing, was a very ambitious woman, and many years ago, in her mansion on South Broad street in Philadelphia, she predicted that Ava would cause a sensation in society on both sides of the Atlantic.

Her prediction has come true—giving a series of regal dinner parties during the season and only the super-exclusive are bidden to the feasts.

So there you have it in a nutshell. The difficulty is, however, that some of them do very much want relief. And until there is some general agreement as to ways and means they can't give up the ceaseless round of leaving cards without running the risk of hurting the feelings of their associates and becoming disliked.

The Cabinet ladies have not yet formulated their plans for the winter, but they are to talk things over tomorrow at a meeting at the home of Mrs. Hughes. The supposition is that they will act as a unit rather than as individuals, whereas in the previous Administration the Cabinet ladies agreed to disagree on certain subjects and each went her own way.

Mrs. Weeks, Mrs. Denby, Mrs. Hoover, Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Fall and Mrs. Davis, with Mrs. Hughes, comprise the active feminine members of the Cabinet circle at the present time. Miss Mellon, the young daughter of the Secretary of the Treasury, although the mistress of her father's house, has no ambition to assume any official responsibility as a hostess.

## CURTAIN RISING UPON 'GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH'

Three Rings Going—The Conference, Congress, the Diplomats—All Will Bear Watching and It Will Be Impossible to Keep an Eye on Everything—Entertaining Begins, But Embassies and Legations Are Marking Time—President Celebrates Birthday.

By JEAN ELIOT

WHAT a time—and what a town—to live in! Already Washington is like the proverbial three-ring circus. In the center ring the conference is tuning up. On one side the diplomatic corps is going strong, on the other "domestic" officialdom. And the poor little debutantes, who usually hold the center of the stage at this season, are reduced to a brief moment between the more-important "turns" in which to make their bid for applause.

And it's only just beginning! When the performance gets well under way it will be quite impossible to keep an eye on everything. Watch the conference—and the gentlemen "up on the hill" will seize that moment to put on something spectacularly interesting. Concentrate on the diplomats and the women of official life, after much talking, will suddenly make up their minds to do something in the matter of making over the social code.

SO, by the time this "greatest show on earth" is over, one may have a very confused idea of what it was all about, but a firm conviction that it was good to have had a ringside seat.

FOR the moment those who concern themselves with the conference are engaged in welcoming the incoming delegations and the only entertainment so far being done for the conferees is in the nature of preliminary skirmishing.

The Japanese Ambassador, Baron Shidehara, postponed his reception for the delegates from Nippon on account of the tragic death of Premier Hara. It was to have been a man's party, given principally that Japan envoys might have an opportunity to meet and become acquainted with the newspaper men of Washington. And, although the Secretary of State and Mrs. Hughes' dinner on Wednesday evening was more or less "official," being given for the American delegates to the conference, it was a small and rather intimate party.

THE Japanese and Chinese delegations were the first to arrive in their entirety, but the others are slowly assembling. Some of the Italians are here and a group of the Belgians. The delegation from the Netherlands got in yesterday—at any rate some of them did—and among them is an old friend, Jonkheer von Starckenborgh-Stachouwer, who was at one time attached to the legation here and who is married to Miss Christine Marburg, of Baltimore, a great favorite in Washington during the Taft regime. Mme. von Starckenborgh accompanies him.

The vanguard of the British delegation reached New York early in the week, but some of them, notably Lord Lee of Fareham and Lady Lee, to whose arrival Washington is looking forward with considerable interest, lingered on in New York for a few days. They are to stay at the Lafayette.

I have never been able to get the little lady's connections quite straight in my mind—yet may remember that the stories printed at the time of Dr. Koo's marriage were both confused and confusing. But I believe she has English connections and am under the impression that her mother was married the second time to an Englishman of the Straits Settlements.

cently come out to join her husband, having lingered in England where three of her children are in school some time after Dr. Sze was transferred from London to Washington.

When Dr. Koo first came out to this country he was hailed as the youngest minister ever received here and presumably he is the youngest ambassador—now that he has been given ambassadorial rank for the period of the conference. However, from the look of him, Dr. Sze is not much older and he, too, has been made as ambassador just as our delegates have had full plenipotentiary powers conferred upon them.

THE embassies and legations are marking time, most of them, until their delegations are complete, and after that the deluge!

At the Japanese embassy, before the premier's assassination, there was a celebration of mikado's birthday. Emperor Yoshihito was actually born on August 31, but that's Japan's hot season when "everybody's out of town," so by imperial decree the imperial birthday is officially observed on October 31, when the weather is fine and the chrysanthemums are in bloom.

For many years it has been the custom of the Japanese ambassador at Washington to keep open house on that day for the Japanese residents of Washington. And this time the number of his visitors was increased by the members of the delegation who had already arrived. In the evening there was a further celebration at the new Nippon Club, which is established in Mrs. Howard Nyman's house in Sixteenth street.

Two princes of the imperial house of Japan also visited Washington last week—H. I. H. Prince Kacho and H. I. H. Prince Enri—and were received by President Harding at the White House. They were in the group of officers of the Japanese training squadron, headed by Vice Admiral Saito, who were escorted to the White House by Ambassador Shidehara. The next day they all went to Annapolis, and, after going over the Naval Academy, were entertained at luncheon by Rear Admiral Henry B. Wilson, superintendent of the Naval Academy, and Mrs. Wilson.

AT the White House? Well, the President had a birthday—a double anniversary, since it marked the passage of one year from the day when the people of the United States sent him to the White House with an overwhelming majority. He spent the day working, lingering late in his office, but the White House staff was kept busy taking care of telegrams and messages of congratulations from everybody conceivable, from foreign potentates to friends from "back home" in Marion, Ohio.

President and Mrs. Harding are much given to impromptu dinner parties, and I had a hunch that they would have guests with them to celebrate his birthday. But inquiries at the White House all elicited the same reply, "Why, no, there's absolutely nothing going on here to-night." The reason became plain when it developed that the President's birthday party was given at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Davis McLean—a day of Mr. and Mrs.